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**FLORIDA LEGISLATURE APPROVES
PRESCRIPTION MONITORING BILL**

TALLAHASSEE, FL – The Florida Legislature approved legislation today authorizing the creation of an electronic prescription drug monitoring system to track the dispensing of controlled substances in Florida to help physicians and law enforcement officials prevent abuse, misuse, and illegal sale of prescription drugs.

Senate Bill 462 and Senate Bill 440 (HB 897 and HB 937) sponsored in the Florida House of Representatives by Representatives Kelly Skidmore (D-Boca Raton), Marcelo Llorente (R-Miami) and Kurt Kelly (R-Ocala) passed the House today with overwhelming support. The legislation will be sent to the governor for his signature.

According to the Florida Office of Drug Control, the rate of deaths in this state caused by prescription drugs is over three times as high as the rate of deaths caused by all illicit drugs combined. About nine Floridians die each day due to prescription drug overdoses, according to Florida medical examiners.

“Our state has been devastated in recent years by the drastic increase in deaths due to prescription drug overdoses. But by passing this legislation, the Florida Legislature has taken a critical step forward in saving the lives of so many Floridians who have become addicted to prescription drugs or may become

addicted to them in the future,” said Representative Skidmore.

The illegal sale of prescription drugs in Florida has become a regional problem. There are currently 38 states with laws that authorize a monitoring system, and Florida’s lack of a system has made it a target for obtaining controlled substances to sell illegally here and in nearby states that have a system in place.

“I have seen firsthand the countless cars with license plates from around the country lined up outside Florida pain clinics waiting their turn to pick up handfuls of pill bottles as easy as picking up a Big Mac at a fast-food drive-through,” said Skidmore. “This legislation will help us end Florida’s status as the nation’s pill mill.”

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